



August 6, 2017

Psalm 119

"The Blessings and Benefits of the Bible - Part 5"

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In today's message, Pastor Gary shares about the truth of the Scriptures, how to find peace of mind, and discerning God's will, all of which are important topics for Christians. Many people today don't believe there is such a thing as absolute truth, and it's far too often the case that people have no real understanding about how to find direction in life. Because there are so many people living outside of the benefits and blessings of God as found in the Bible, many people have never experienced real peace of mind.

The Bible Provides An Eternal Source Of Truth
That Was Settled in The Heavens - Psalm 119:89-96

1. **Psalm 119:89** - *"Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens."*
2. Truth is *really* hard to find, and that's particularly true in the time in which we live!
3. The Bible is the only source of consistent, reliable, and unchanging truth.
4. Pastor Gary said: "You cannot improve upon God's Word. And, despite the uncertainty and insecurity of the world in which we live, I'm thankful that as a Christian, I'm part of a kingdom... that cannot be shaken... [It] cannot be shaken because the kingdom of God is established on the Word of God, which is his reliable [and] unchanging truth for the ages. Quite honestly, [and I say] this with all sincerity, I can only make sense of my life and of this world by reading the Bible. [The Bible] keeps me centered. [The Bible] keeps me grounded in the truth. [The Bible] provides for me... a foundation from which... I can make right decisions and discern things correctly and evaluate things properly, [concerning] my life. I can respect the differences of opinions that are pervasive

in our culture... I can love people who don't share my values or views, but the Bible is my compass that tells me what is true north."

- a. **Hebrews 12:28** - *"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful..."*
5. The Bible cannot be manipulated to say whatever we want it to say, which many people want to do to suit an ever-changing culture.
 6. Pastor Gary said: "[Our] objective [should be] to honor God, honor his Word, and live according to the revealed, expressed, reliable truth of God's Word. [This isn't] always comfortable, and it certainly isn't always popular. It isn't convenient... But, it's God's best for [us]... If you start to live out this Word, as unpopular as it is, it will be counterculture, and you will have to realize that if you get serious about God and serious about God's Word, when you start to live it, you will be more and more perceived by our culture to be out of step with mainstream thought and values. Be prepared! If we live out the Bible as the standard-bearer for truth, we will be in conflict with the world in which we live. We may be accused of being stuck in the past... or accused of being out of touch or being regressive instead of progressive. People may say that we are haters because we object or disagree with certain lifestyles or behaviors. People may say that we are narrow minded because we believe absolute [truth] versus relative truth. People may patronize us or insult us or ridicule us for believing and living as we do. Well, so be it. So be it! Quite honestly, if I don't feel some sense of alienation or estrangement in this world... or feeling oddly out of place in this world... or experience some measure of persecution for my faith in Christ, then perhaps it should cause me to pause and wonder if I am actually and effectively, openly living my life for Christ, because some of those things are going to be naturally experienced if we really are who we say we are, and if we really believe what we say we believe. We shouldn't be surprised that the world will think oddly of us."
 - a. **John 15:18-19** - *"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you."*
 - b. **Matthew 5:11-12** - *"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*
 - c. **Matthew 5: 13-14** - *"You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world..."*

The Bible Provides A Safe Place For Us To Rest Our Mind – Psalm 119:97-104

7. **Psalm 119:97, 99** – *“Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long... I meditate on your statutes.”*
8. Since our minds are very fragile, and we don't have an “off button,” we often experience anxious thoughts and restlessness.
9. The Bible is the only source of help, because it provides us with a safe place to rest our mind.
10. Investing time reading the Word of God will bring rest and peace to weary, tired minds.

The Bible Helps Us Discern God's Will and Direction In Life – Psalm 119:105-112

11. **Psalm 119:105** – *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”*
12. The Counsel of God's Word
 - a. Scripture will either speak directly or indirectly to situations in our lives, and it's the Word of God that will help us discern his will.
 - b. **Psalm 32:8** – *“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.”*
 - c. **Joshua 1:8** – *“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”*
13. The Comfort of God's Peace
 - a. **Colossians 3:15** – *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...”*
 - b. Pastor Gary said: “Never violate your peace! I don't care how wonderful the opportunity is! I don't care [if] it's “once in a lifetime”! I don't care how pretty she is or how charming he is! If you don't have a peace, don't go there!”
14. The Confirmation of God's People
 - a. A “word from the Lord” should never be received as direction from the Lord, rather it should only serve as confirmation of what you believe to be the Lord's will in a specific matter.
 - b. One example is found of receiving a “word from the Lord” is found in the book of Acts, and it concerns the apostle Peter and Cornelius.
 - i. **Acts 10:4-5** – *“Cornelius stared at him in fear. ‘What is it, Lord?’ he asked. The angel answered, ‘Your prayers and gifts to the poor have*

come up as a memorial offering before God. Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter.’ ”

- c. Pastor Gary said: “[When] the Lord begins to move in your life to direct you somewhere, wait on it, pause, pray about it, confirm it through Scripture, see if you have God’s peace, and sometimes God will bring confirmation through other people to help... solidify [what his will is].”

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).